



Safe Blogging Tips for Teens

- **Be as anonymous as possible.** Avoid postings that could enable a stranger to locate you. That includes your last name, the name of your school, sports teams, the town you live in, and where you hang out.
- **Protect your info.** Use the service's privacy controls and seriously consider giving your parents access. Winning their trust by letting them check in every now and then will ease their concerns and probably lead to more trust from them and freedom for you.
- **Avoid in-person meetings.** Don't get together with someone you "meet" in a profile or blog unless you are certain of their actual identity. Although it's still not risk-free, if you do meet the person, arrange the meeting in a public place and *bring some friends along*.
- **Photos: Think before posting.** What's uploaded to the Net can be downloaded by anyone and passed around or posted online pretty much forever. Avoid posting photos that allow people to identify you (for example, when they're searching for your high school), especially sexually suggestive images. Before uploading a photo, think about how you'd feel if it were seen by a parent/grandparent, college admissions counselor, or future employer.
- **Check comments regularly.** If you allow them on your profile or blog, check them often. Don't respond to mean or embarrassing comments. Delete them and, if possible, block offensive people from commenting further.
- **Be honest about your age.** Membership rules are there to protect people. If you are too young to sign up, do not attempt to lie about your age. Talk with your parents about alternative sites that may be appropriate for you.

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